

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed December 27, 1932

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HOT SUNSHINE IN COLD WEATHER

There are sheltered valleys in the high Alps - Davos being a familiar example - where invalids rest and exercise outdoors in the sunshine almost naked and are kept comfortably warm by the intensity of solar radiation, though the air, as shown by the thermometer, is very cold and the ground is covered with snow. In the polar regions, even at moderate altitudes, explorers sometimes actually suffer with heat while tramping in the sunshine over the snowfields. In both cases the solar rays are robbed of but little heat in passing through the pure, dry atmosphere, and the air itself is but little heated.

The late Archdeacon Stuck, describing the work of transportation involved in climbing the Muldrow Glacier during his ascent of Mount McKinley (alias Denali) in 1913, says:

"How intolerably hot it was, on some of these days, relaying the stuff up the glacier! I shall never forget Ascension Day, which occurred this year on the 1st of May. With the mercurial barometer and a heavy pack of instruments, cameras and films on my back and the rope over my shoulder, bent double hauling at the sled, I trudged along all day, panting and sweating, through four or five inches of new-fallen snow, while the glare of the sun was terrific. It seemed impossible that, surrounded entirely by ice and snow, with millions of tons of ice underfoot, it could be so hot."

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